

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Declassified
Authority: 43265 By:
Brewer Thompson
Date: 05-06-2015

TO : The Ambassador

DATE: February 11, 1971

FROM : John W. Mowinckel

SUBJECT: Disappearance of Rubens Paiva

The continued disappearance of former Deputy Rubens Paiva after his arrest two or three weeks ago is causing profound concern to his many friends and associates. [redacted] EO25x1

[redacted] Paiva died under interrogation either from a heart attack or other causes. When this becomes known (as it eventually will) it is certain that his friends will generate a violent and emotional campaign against the Brazilian government by every means possible --international press, letters to Senators Fulbright, Church, Kennedy, etc.

Many of Paiva's friends still have a slim hope that he may still be alive although they admit that this may be wishful thinking. They suspect that, since he was a fat man, he may have died of a heart attack under torture.

While I had never heard of Paiva before his arrest he is apparently very well known in Brazil as a physically and intelligently courageous man of the left who was a deputy during the Goulart regime and cassated in 1964. He was a wealthy man who inherited money from his well-to-do family and made a good deal on his own as an engineer. His family owns land in the Valle Ribeira area near São Paulo. While Carlos Lamarca did not have his guerrilla headquarters on Paiva's land, it was close by.

All Paiva's friends are convinced that he has had no sympathy at any time with the terrorist movement or with violence as a means of opposing the Brazilian military. They say, however, that as a leader of left-wing thought in Brazil it is possible he may at some time or another have given assistance to political fugitives related to friends of his.

I further understand that Paiva was a very successful engineer and after his cassation did a lot of construction work for both the Castello Branco and Costa e Silva governments. He is tremendously respected, particularly by his friends and also by many of those who disagree with him politically.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



5010-108

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

.2.

It is known to his friends that he was arrested because of a letter addressed to him by someone in Chile which arrived here in the hands of some woman.

Comment: This is another example of irresponsible strong arm tactics and bungling by Brazilian security forces. The difference is that this time, when the facts become known, it will not be possible to sweep them under the rug. Confirmation of his death will raise one hell of a stink and once again embarrass the U.S. Government in its relationship with the GOB.

In my opinion every effort should be made by you and other members of this mission to convince the GOB that something must be done to punish at least some of those responsible--punished by public trial. If the GOB does not do this fairly soon, it is certain that the GOB's sins will rub off on us, thereby causing one more problem on the Hill and in the press for the Nixon administration.

Enclosure:
copy of Feb. 2nd N.Y. Times article

cc: Minister Boonstra
Col. Moura
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Low (Mr. Walker)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

my brothers."